



# Objection 14

Shire of Wiluna

12 pages

**From:** [Wiluna CEO](#)  
**To:** [FedRedistribution - WA](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Electoral Redistribution- Wiluna  
**Date:** Friday, 26 March 2021 11:38:13 AM  
**Attachments:** [20210326 Letter Rick Wilson \(Electoral Boundary\).pdf](#)  
[Wiluna RDA Boundary Realignment 202012.pdf](#)  
[Shire of Wiluna Demographic Profile.pdf](#)

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Good morning Sir/Madam,

Please see attached correspondence related objection and comment on the changes to federal electoral boundaries between Durack and O'Connor.

Should you require any additional information, please contact me on [REDACTED].

Regards,

Laura Dwyer  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
Shire of Wiluna  
PO Box 38, Wiluna WA 6646  
Ph: (08) 9981 8000  
Email: [REDACTED]



<https://www.facebook.com/shireofwiluna/>

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26 March 2021

Mr Rick Wilson MP  
Member for O'Connor, Western Australia  
PO Box 10415  
KALGOORLIE WA 6430  
Via email only: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Wilson,

**RE: ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT- WILUNA**

I am writing this letter to you in relation to comment on recent electoral boundary changes and would like to formally request that the local government area of Wiluna be moved from Durack to the seat of O'Connor.

The Shire of Wiluna has recently made applications for development commission boundary changes from Mid-West to the Goldfields-Esperance region and the regional development Australia boundary from Mid-West Gascoyne to Goldfields-Esperance. Through pursuing these changes, Wiluna is pursuing full alignment in the interests of the community and industry.

A key issue that Wiluna experiences is the disconnect through all levels of government and service provision. Disconnection means Wiluna becomes forgotten. When seeking support for issues the common comment is that Wiluna belongs to another region and therefore is not in "their patch".

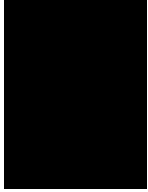
Ranking 703 on the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) score, Wiluna is the fourth most disadvantaged local government in Western Australia. With a remote area rating of 5 Wiluna is classed as very remote. From these statistics alone distance is a major barrier and being 740km to Geraldton via gravel and bitumen, the 534kms to Kalgoorlie on the Goldfields Highway makes alignment to O'Connor more accessible with Kalgoorlie being our closest major regional centre.

Major transport routes exist in and out of Wiluna through the Goldfields Highway between Wiluna and Meekatharra as well as the Wiluna North Road meeting the Great Northern Highway. Progressing such projects requires advocacy from members that are accessible. Our connections to the Northern Goldfields are strong through in which a group has formed in support of this. We are also members of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (GVROC) since its inception in 2007 which covers the Goldfields-Esperance region.

For further information attached is the business case provided to Regional Development Australia requesting boundary realignment under regional development federal boundaries for further information as well as a snapshot of the demographics of Wiluna.

We hope that you consider this request and should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly via email [REDACTED] or by phone [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,



Laura Dwyer  
**Chief Executive Officer**

**Shire OF  
Wiluna**

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PO Box 38, Wiluna 6646  
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**Shire of Wiluna**

# **BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT**

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA**

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## **Business Case: ....**

### **Executive Summary**

The Shire of Wiluna (Shire) is seeking boundary realignment within Regional Development Australia to be included in the Goldfields-Esperance Region under the Federal boundaries. In seeking this realignment, the Shire anticipates this will provide greater opportunities for advocacy on community issues, funding support for projects and economic development within the Northern Goldfields sub-region.

### **Background**

Located 940km north east of Perth, the townsite of Wiluna is the main residential centre of the Shire of Wiluna. With a population of 742, approximately 30% of residents identify as Indigenous<sup>1</sup>. With industries in mining, agriculture and tourism, the Shire has many opportunities for increased economic development. With major projects ready for progression at the Wiluna Airport Upgrades of \$19M and Wiluna Caravan Park \$3.1M, local economic benefits will flow onto tourism and mining industries.

For the Shire to be included in the Goldfields-Esperance Region for State and Federal Boundaries, this presents the opportunity for better alignment of economic opportunities, community advocacy and service provision for Wiluna.

In 1993 boundary realignment for the Shire of Wiluna occurred to enable the Ngaanyatjaraku Shire to represent the Western Desert communities. This saw the Shire of Wiluna split into two local governments, Ngaanyatjaraku representing the eastern portion and Wiluna retaining the western.<sup>2</sup>

Along with the separation of the Shire of Wiluna, the Regional Development Commissions Act 1993 was created to

*“...establish regional development commissions to coordinate and promote the economic development of regions of Western Australia, to provide for the establishment of regional development advisory committees, to establish a Regional Development Council, to continue existing regional development bodies as commissions under this Act, to repeal certain Acts and for related purposes.”<sup>3</sup>*

Within the creation of the Regional Development Commissions Act 1993, nine Development Commissions were created to serve the regions under the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. The Shire of Wiluna was included in the Mid-West Region.

Following on from the development of State boundaries and Development Commissions, in 2012 Regional Development Australia (RDA) was developed and the establishment of Committees to represent the regions. The intention of establishing these committees was to support regional development by engaging local leaders from all levels of government

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020. *2016 Census QuickStats*, accessed 25 November 2020. [https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA59250](https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA59250)

<sup>2</sup> Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku 2020. *Shire Information/Background*, accessed 25 November 2020. <https://www.ngaanyatjaraku.wa.gov.au/index.php/our-shire/shire-information>

<sup>3</sup> Government of Western Australia 2020. *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993*, accessed 25 November 2020. [https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main\\_mrtitle\\_815\\_homepage.html](https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_815_homepage.html)

business and community to represent the views and support economic development within their regions.<sup>4</sup>

RDA committees in Western Australia were established based on ABS local government 2011 boundary datasets<sup>5</sup>. When creating the boundaries Regional Development Australia combined the Mid-West and Gascoyne regions to create RDA Midwest Gascoyne. Similar to the Development Commissions, Wiluna was included in the boundary catchment of RDA Midwest Gascoyne (RDAMWG).

In 2007 the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (GVROC) was established encompassing the 9 local governments in the Goldfields Esperance Region as well as Wiluna. The basis for establishing GVROC was for these 10 local governments to meet to share common issues and advocate on behalf of them, but to also drive common projects. Despite being in a different region, the Shire of Wiluna have maintained a strong working relationship with the local governments in the Goldfields Esperance region and worked collaboratively to deliver a number of initiatives through GVROC including:

- Goldfields Records Storage Facility (a dedicated storage facility for document storage and records management)
- Portable toilet and crowd barriers for use by all 10 councils to use at public events
- Solar power installations
- Infrastructure Strategy for the region, including Wiluna)
- Feral Cactus initiatives
- Feral Camel Study

Through GVROC, the Shire of Wiluna has a good working relationship with RDA Goldfields Esperance (RDAGE) & the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission (GEDC).

## Region Comparisons

When considering the Midwest Gascoyne Region against the Goldfields Esperance Region, there are 21 local government areas<sup>6</sup> versus 9<sup>7</sup> (excluding Wiluna). For Wiluna to move into the Goldfields Esperance Region would provide better opportunity for engagement and advocacy on behalf of the community.

With the geographical location of Wiluna in the Midwest Gascoyne region, often opportunities with agencies are lacking due to distance and isolation. Wiluna's population base is lower and often means that less attention is given to Wiluna. Wiluna's closest regional city is Kalgoorlie (in the Goldfields Esperance Region). Wiluna is 718km from Geraldton and 534km from Kalgoorlie. Sealed roads exist between Wiluna and Kalgoorlie however access from Wiluna

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<sup>4</sup> Parliament of Australia n.d. *Framework of Regional Development*, accessed 25 November 2020. [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/House/Former\\_Committees/Regional\\_Development\\_and\\_Decentralisation/RDD/Final\\_Report/section?id=committees%2Freportrep%2F024136%2F25959](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Former_Committees/Regional_Development_and_Decentralisation/RDD/Final_Report/section?id=committees%2Freportrep%2F024136%2F25959)

<sup>5</sup> Australian Government data.gov.au n.d. *Regional Development Australia 2011 (September 2011)*, accessed 25 November 2020. <https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/regional-development-australia-2011-september-2011>

<sup>6</sup> Regional Development Australia Midwest Gascoyne 2020. *Take a Look at Mid West WA*, accessed 25 November 2020. <https://www.rdamwg.com.au/mwg-region.html>

<sup>7</sup> Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance 2020. *Regional Information*, accessed 25 November 2020. <https://www.rdage.com.au/regional-information/>



to Geraldton is via the Goldfields Highway which is mostly unsealed. 124km of the 183km road between Wiluna and Meekatharra is requiring sealing at an estimated cost of \$90M.

The Midwest Gascoyne region covers 613,277 km<sup>2</sup> whereas the Goldfields-Esperance 771,276km<sup>2</sup><sup>8</sup>. Although the inclusion of Wiluna would see the Goldfields-Esperance region increase in size to 952,573km<sup>2</sup>, the benefits of engaging with an RDA that represents less local government areas in the regions will provide better opportunities for engagement and representation. RDA Midwest Gascoyne's office is located in Geraldton. RDA Goldfields Esperance's office is located in Kalgoorlie.

Much of Wiluna's engagement with various stakeholders, including RDA Goldfields Esperance, occurs in Kalgoorlie Boulder given that it is the closest regional centre to Wiluna.

## Service Provision

Due to location and accessibility, many government agencies deliver services to Wiluna via Kalgoorlie as noted below:

Kalgoorlie (Goldfields Esperance region)

- Mainroads
- Western Australia Police
- Housing (Department of Communities)
- Education
- Water Corporation
- WA Country Health
- Department of Transport
- Central TAFE Kalgoorlie
- Wirrpanda Foundation (CDP)
- Centrecare
- RDA Goldfields Esperance
- Goldfields Esperance Development Commission

Meekatharra (Mid West Gascoyne Region)

- Department of Child Protection

Geraldton (Mid West Gascoyne Region)

- Regional Development Australia Midwest Gascoyne
- DLGSC
- Midwest Development Commission

Carnarvon (Mid West Gascoyne Region)

- Magistrate
- Horizon Power

## Challenges

For Wiluna to move into the Goldfields-Esperance region, the biggest challenge for RDA's servicing Wiluna is the distance and isolation from the major regional centres and low population base.

As previously highlighted Wiluna often misses out on opportunities or representation due to isolation and distance from these major centres. With a low population base of 742 residents

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<sup>8</sup> GEDC Our Region [www.gedc.wa.gov.au/our-region](http://www.gedc.wa.gov.au/our-region) accessed 2 December 2020

from the 2016 Census<sup>9</sup>, Wiluna struggles for representation against either the Mid West Gascoyne or Goldfields Esperance general populations. However comparatively when considering populations between the Mid West Gascoyne at 67,757 versus the Goldfields Esperance at 54,363, movement of Wiluna to the Goldfields Esperance region would be relatively insignificant for representation based on population.

For the RDAGE committee to engage with Wiluna, distance is increased, however with Kalgoorlie-Boulder being the closest major regional centre and requirements for business to visit engagement opportunities will not be limited. Technology use for meetings and the ability within the RDAGE Constitution to allow meetings via electronic or telephone provide opportunity for connection without having to travel distance.

In addition to this with the strong relationship Wiluna holds within the Northern Goldfields, often meetings are held in Leonora as a central point for the group and provides opportunity to share travel requirements.

The Shire of Wiluna note the realignment of RDA boundaries poses the issue of funding arrangements to service another local government area. Discussions have been had with both RDAGE<sup>10</sup> and RDAMWG<sup>11</sup>, and upon decision of their committees have provided letters of in principle support for the request. This support however has been on the proviso that boundary realignment is supported by the State Government which requires legislation changes. No concerns were raised in relation to funding constraints to provide representation for Wiluna by RDAGE. Wiluna understands consideration will be required to be given by RDAGE and negotiated with Regional Development Australia and RDAMWG for changes.

## **Benefits**

For Wiluna there is significant benefit to be gained in realignment to the Goldfields-Esperance Region. Presently the State Government is working through legislative processes for changes to the Development Commission boundaries. To obtain complete alignment between State and Federal boundaries provides better opportunities for advocacy for Wiluna, as well as opportunities for access to stakeholders that are aligned to the region appropriately.

Furthermore, considerations should be given for alignment with Electoral Commission boundaries so that complete synergies exist for Wiluna in the same region, as all levels are able to speak to regional issues for Wiluna if identified in the one region.

The community is hopeful that in seeking alignment that more can be explored to ensure service provision is aligned to the same region. Should this be able to occur there are more opportunities for providers to collaborate and coordinate services for the community, as many services require support and assistance from each other to operate.

Strong links with the Northern Goldfields exist with opportunities from sealing the Outback Highway, and funding opportunities for the Goldfields Highway (Wiluna to Meekatharra) creating potential sealed road links across to Geraldton. These roads will create beneficial tourism links in the future to increase economic development for towns along these routes. In

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<sup>9</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020. *2016 Census QuickStats*, accessed 25 November 2020. [https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA59250](https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA59250)

<sup>10</sup> Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance Boundary Realignment Letter of Support, Appendix 1.

<sup>11</sup> Regional Development Australia Midwest Gascoyne Boundary Realignment Letter of Support, Appendix 2.

addition to this training and employment opportunities for Indigenous people exist in the Northern Goldfields through the Martu-ku Yiwarra Training Centre and joint venture between Carey Mining Alliance and Central Earthmoving during road construction of the Outback and Goldfields Highways.

Synergies also exist between the Tjukurba Art Gallery in Wiluna and the Tjulyuru Cultural and Civic Centre in Warburton (Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku). With the traditional landowners of Wiluna being the Martu people, land areas occupy those across the Great Sandy, Gibson and Little Sandy Deserts of Western Australia, Northern Territory and South Australia. The areas of the Gibson Desert and Little Sandy Deserts span over Wiluna and Ngaanyatjarraku lands in which many of the Indigenous families are culturally connected and often travel between for cultural business.

Strengthening relationships in the Northern Goldfields provides additional opportunities to focus on advocating for issues relating to drought, camels, social impacts and mining and tourism opportunities. With an average Indigenous population of 39% across the Northern Goldfields, many common challenges exist for access to appropriate housing and services, however advocating with a common voice from the Northern Goldfields provides a stronger voice to advocate for improvements of these issues.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion to this request to realign Regional Development Australia boundaries for Wiluna, key opportunities and synergies exist in the areas of advocacy for social issues, economic development opportunities and coordination of services for the future of Wiluna.

Whilst it is understood through realignment does not provide a complete solution for Wiluna, this provides opportunity to commence discussions for the broader benefit of the community, Northern Goldfields and Goldfields-Esperance regions.

**Shire of Wiluna**

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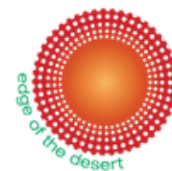
E: [reception@wiluna.wa.gov.au](mailto:reception@wiluna.wa.gov.au)

[www.wiluna.wa.gov.au](http://www.wiluna.wa.gov.au)

*This information is available in alternative formats upon request, please contact us for assistance.*



# Shire of Wiluna



**745**  
**PEOPLE**

Across the whole Shire of Wiluna

**30% ABORIGINAL**

**MEDIAN AGE 35**

**4<sup>TH</sup>**  
**MOST**  
**DISADVANTAGED**  
**LGA IN WA**

**SEIFA SCORE = 703**

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

**181,297**  
**SQ KM**



**950 KM** North East of **PERTH**  
**550 KM** North of **KALGOORLIE**  
**720 KM** East of **GERALDTON**



**AUSTRALIAN STANDARD**  
**GEOGRAPHICAL**  
**CLASSIFICATION (ASGC)**  
**RA5 (VERY REMOTE)**

Traditional Owners

**MARTU**  
**PEOPLE**



Indigenous language of the area  
**MARTUWANGKA**

**3 ABORIGINAL**  
**COMMUNITIES**

**BONDINI** 6km east  
**KUTKABUBBA** 36 km north  
**WINDIDDA** 199km east

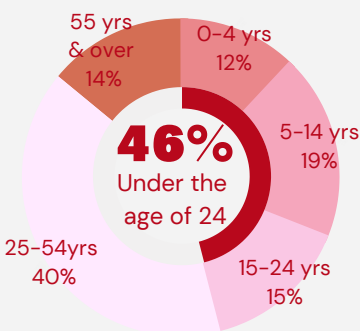
**78.7%**

Speak an Aboriginal language at home



**51%**

Living in  
**OVERCROWDED**  
dwelling



22% under 24 in total population



60% in total population



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CDP)**

**6.3%**  
**UNEMPLOYED**

Wirrpanda Foundation deliver CDP and act as the single point of contact for job seekers, employers and host organisations in each community.



**TRADE TRAINING CENTRE**

Tailors training for students that lead to local job opportunities, particularly in the mining industry working directly with the Martu Elders and local industry

**WILUNA**  
**REMOTE COMMUNITY**  
**SCHOOL**

caters for four year olds to Year 12 and has a population of between 85 and 115 students.



**"WIRRA SCHOOLS"**  
**REMOTE SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE STRATEGY**

Working together with families and the Wiluna community to improve school attendance for the kids

**TJUKURBA ART GALLERY**



Thriving Indigenous Art Gallery with over

**45** **CORE ARTISTS**

**40%** **PARTICIPATING THROUGH CDP**

**NGANGGANAWILI**  
**ABORIGINAL**  
**HEALTH SERVICE**  
**(NAHS)**

Aboriginal Community Controlled health service providing

General Healthcare, Accident & Emergency Services, Chronic Disease Management, Child & Maternal Services

